202 In the afternoon I nearly lost my way among the trails leading to the village. The Maué Indians who accompanied me, as well as the guide and the interpreter, had forged ahead, leaving me behind with two companions, and had already reached the maloca while I still attempted with difficulty to find my way, guided only by the sound of a horn which I could hear somewhere ahead of me.

It was a Mundurucu Indian from Necodemos, who had generously come to meet me, and who blew on his instrument to guide me.

My satisfaction was great when at nightfall I came upon this savage, who was about thirty-five or forty, and who was short, fat, dark and ugly, but so happy and cheerful that he seemed like a child. [81]

I arrived in Necodemos at seven o'clock in the evening.

I was finally realizing one of my fondest wishes, namely, to see a savage tribe in its primitive state, exactly as it must have been before the discovery of Brazil; living according to the laws of nature and lacking all contact with the ideas of other peoples that might serve to alter its beliefs and traditions.

There are thinkers who do not acknowledge biblical tradition and who hold that mankind began its earthly journey in darkness, in the state of nudity and savagery I saw before me, and guided by the light of reason and by Providence climbed to the present state of civilization. This doctrine is more comforting than the one which represents man as fallen from a paradise of light and bliss; fallen, for minor sins that were not his own, into the extreme misery of these unhappy savages.

609 When I arrived, some eighty stout Mundurucu awaited me on the village grounds and received me with a display of open curiosity.

32 To me, the appearance of these men was no less curious, painted as they were with such identical designs that they looked like uniformed soldiers. Dozens of fires which burned on the square lent this picture a sinister quality, casting reflections on the broad, naked, bronze-colored chests.

609 I greeted them, bidding them good evening with one of 57 the few words in their language I had memorized for such purposes: "Chipate." They all answered: "Chipate." One of them addressed

726 distribute themselves in long lines and wait for the enemy to finish shooting his arrows. These arrows, in a display of great skill are caught in flight by the women who are stationed nearby, or the arrows are avoided by quick jumps. Only after this do they shoot their own arrows (which they do with great speed as they are handed them by their women) at a time when the enemy, fighting in closer ranks, has not much ammunition left. They attack only by day; and so they are attacked, by the equally war-like Araras, at night. In their permanent dwellings they protect themselves against this by a thoroughly military arrangement. In time of war all the men of military age sleep in a large, common hut distant from the women and [534 they are guarded by patrols who signal with the toré (beni), a rasping 208] cane trumpet, or with the kiohoa, a whistle. With this instrument the commander, who remains behind the fighting men, during a battle, gives his orders usually by having signals blown by two of his adjutants [392] simultaneously from horns of different lengths. In battle the 727 Mundrucu gives no quarter. As soon as he has felled his enemy with arrow or javelin he takes him by the hair and cuts through his neck muscles and spine with a short cane knife, doing it so skillfully that the head is quickly severed from the body. A head so taken becomes the subject of the victor's most careful attentions. As soon as he is back with his comrades they kindle a great many fires over which the skull, cleaned of brains, muscle, eyes and tongue, is dried on pegs. Every day the skull is repeatedly washed with water, drenched with oil in which rocou has been dissolved and placed in the sun. When it is dried hard the skull is equipped with an artificial brain of dyed cotton, with eyes of resin and with teeth and decorated with a feather hood. This revolting trophy is carried about by the victor on a string. When he is in the communal hut, it is placed in the sun or in the smoke in the daytime and at night is put up by his hammock like a sentinal. Enemies captured in surprise attacks are not killed but taken into the tribe.

595 A man has several wives according to his power and importance. He puts up his hammock in the section of the communal hut apportioned to him near the hammock of the elder wife who, though not necessarily his favorite, is the mistress of his household and often even brings younger [578 women to him. Jealousy and quarrels are the result of this polygamy 846] which is more thoroughly developed here than in other tribes. Just like the old Tupis and the Caribs the men here lie for several weeks in the

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726 even short expeditions could well take a party over 100 miles from home; and 100 miles through dense, trackless forest and across major streams is no mean trip.

It is obvious that Mundurucú warfare consisted of much more than sporadic and short forays. The average party campaigned only during the dry [132] season, setting out when the rivers fell in May and returning before they again rose in November. Longer expeditions set out at the end of the rains and remained in the field throughout the rainy season and the following dry period, returning before the next rains.

721 As among the Indians of the North American Plains, youths sought openly 554 for the excitement of war and looked upon it as a means of self-validation and aggrandizement of prestige. But unlike the Plains Indians, the Mundurucú did not openly assert this prestige once it was won; if anything, the person who achieved status became even more self-effacing and less prone to open competitiveness. The young men, however, did not embark upon raids by themselves. They expressed their desire to the chief of the village in words indicative of the martial disposition of the society: "My grandfather, take us to hunt the pariwat. We wish to die in the forest, not in the village." The chief consulted with the older men in order to decide whether the occasion was auspicious. If there was general approval, he proceeded to organize a war [561] party that would include the eager young but would be under the competent direction of experienced elders, for age in Mundurucú society was an important criterion of status.

721 Although the initiative for a war originated in one village, men from sev-202 eral villages participated. The determination of a village to form a war party was quickly communicated to other communities, but a formal invitation had [575] to be extended. This was carried by a man of the *Muchacha* society, a group [701] of older warriors who were especially well versed in Mundurucú lore and songs and who had taken enemy heads. As the messenger neared each village he [534] sounded three short blasts on a horn used only by members of the society, and was answered by a like signal from a Muchacha of the village being invited. After entering the village, he delivered the invitation and proceeded on his itinerary, collecting volunteers from a number of communities.

621 Intervillage cooperation enabled the Mundurucú to place large war parties 701 in the field without stripping any one village of all its manpower. Those who took part generally desired to clear land for gardens first, but even when this 722 was not possible or when the expedition lasted more than a year, the horticultural cycle could be maintained by those remaining behind. The problem of leadership of a group drawn from several communities was resolved by delegating authority to two village chiefs who were also members of the Muchacha society. Actually, the two formal leaders did not have absolute control, and all important decisions were made by the older men of the expedition acting as a body.

708 The war party was accompanied by the wives of the warriors and a number of unmarried girls. Their tasks were to carry cooking utensils and all of

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the equipment of the men, except for their arms, thus leaving the males unencumbered for hunting and fighting. They also cooked, fetched water and firewood and performed other female services. Contrary to Spix and von Martius' (1831:1313) assertion that the women helped on the battlefield, informants said that the women were always left at a safe distance from the scene of combat. The men then proceeded to encircle the enemy village under cover of darkness.

No warfare rituals were held prior to the departure of the expedition, but the most powerful shaman available always accompanied the war party and throughout the course of march was able to ascertain events in the enemy village by sending one of his instruments abroad to spy upon the foe. Once the village had been encircled, the shaman blew ant-eater hair or macaw feathers in the direction of the houses in order to put the enemy into a deep sleep. Eagle feathers were similarly directed at the village in the belief that this would cause the defenders to become confused and impotent in the face of attack.

When the occupants of the village were benumbed, the warriors waited for the cry of a species of bird that breaks into song at dawn. When this signal was heard, the chiefs sounded blasts on their horns and cried the order to attack. Incendiary arrows, made by affixing dried corn-cobs to the end of the arrow shaft, were ignited and loosed at the thatch roofs of the houses. The Mundurucú then broke from cover and dashed into the clearing of the enemy village, emitting wild shouts calculated to terrify the people. Adult males and females were killed and decapitated, and prepubescent children of both sexes were captured by the attackers. The Mundurucú then beat a hasty retreat before the enemy could reorganize his forces and summon additional support.

The retiring Mundurucú force drove its captive children ahead hurriedly and stopped at the temporary shelter only long enough to pick up the women and supplies. They then made a day and night forced march until they had reached a safe distance from the enemy. At this point, the expedition turned toward home or, frequently, to new fields of conquest.

A central object of the raid was the taking of enemy heads, and a strict protocol was observed in the preparation of the trophies. After killing an enemy man or woman, the warrior quickly decapitated the corpse. The spine was severed at the foramen magnum, but the skin was cut around the chest, shoulders, and back to leave a substantial flap below the point of severance. The excess skin compensated for the inevitable shrinkage that accompanied desiccation. A piece of wood was then thrust into the mouth of the trophy to prevent its locking closed in rigor mortis. During the return march the head was preserved by removing the brains, boiling it, and then drying it near a bonfire.

The war party broke up after reaching Mundurucú country, and the participants proceeded to their respective villages. Signals were sounded on horns a short distance outside the villages, and two messengers were sent to inform the people of the results of the raid. The boys of the community went to meet the waiting warriors and received the trophy heads from them. They ran

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it, and it served as a general organization for persons of warrior status. The *Dajeboiši* was the leader and organizer of these festivities also and he customarily sent two messengers to the chiefs of the other Mundurucú villages to issue the following invitation: "Come, eat the hide of the game of the *Dajeboiši*. Come, drink *werú* and *mörí*. It is only a mouthful, but come." The chiefs then called their people together and announced, "They want us to come and eat and drink. Everyone who wishes may go." The invited villagers, who had long known of the impending ceremony and were expecting the invitation, cut their hair and ornamented themselves in the traditional Mundurucú style and set out the next day. Food had been amassed by the people of the host village and all settled down to feasting and completing their body painting.

On the day after their arrival, a member of the *Muchacha*[1] society, an exclusive group composed of old and valiant *Dajeboiši* who had mastered great knowledge of lore and songs, sounded the *pem*, a musical instrument used only by them. At this signal all the young boys, who had previously been tonsured and painted, fled into the forest and underbrush to hide from the men. The men then spread throughout the environs of the village and each captured a previously selected boy of the other moiety. The captor decorated the boy with necklaces and belts of glass beads (i.e., during the nineteenth century) and monkeys' teeth. By the time all had been assembled, dusk had already fallen, and the *Darekši* society returned to the village in a single file with the boys in the lead. All the men marched with bows and arrows set in release position. The women remained in the dwelling houses, for it was believed that any who saw the *Darekši* enter the village would be killed during the next war.

After entering the village, the men went to the house of the *Dajeboiši*, where they were served food and drink. A number of small ceramic vessels were laid out in a line and filled with various types of meat in a sauce made from the Brazil nut. Behind each bowl of meat was another filled with a drink prepared from sweet manioc. The line of men passed single file down the row of bowls, each man squatting on his haunches and taking one piece of meat with beijú (a flat manioc flour cake) and a sip of the sweet manioc drink. Then, still squatting, he moved to the right and took another piece of meat and beijú and another sip of the drink. When he reached the end of the line he returned to the beginning; the process was continued until all the food was eaten.

Certain precautions were taken with the drinks because of the sacred nature of the occasion. The Vultures had to eat apart from the other *Darekši*, for if one of the latter were to drink from the same vessel he would turn into a vulture when he died. Also, the sweet manioc drink could be made only by young girls and old women to avoid the threat of contamination of the drink by a drop of menstrual blood or semen from the vagina of a mature woman. The men were prohibited from sexual intercourse immediately before the ceremony for they too could contaminate the beverage and cause others who drank from the vessel to fall victims of the yellowing sickness, or *ujewaií*. To prevent this a shaman examined the

[1] The identity of this term with the Spanish word for 'girl' is an interesting but entirely independent parallel.